

Department of Defense Forestry Reserve Account

What is the Forestry Reserve Account?

The Department of Defense (DoD) Forestry Reserve Account (FRA) awards funds to the Military Services each year on a competitive basis primarily for projects that benefit DoD forestry resources. For example, to:

- Improve or restore forest lands
- Manage natural resources in forested areas
- Inventory existing forest resources
- Cover unanticipated contingencies related to administering forest lands and producing forest products

The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) determines which projects to fund each Fiscal Year (FY), and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy, and Environment is responsible for FRA Program oversight and management.

FRA Funding Summary

FRA Deposits

FRA Program funding is generated by commercial forestry sales at DoD installations. Figure 1 shows the funds each Military Service deposited between FY11 and FY15. Deposits are generated from previous FY earnings. Changes in deposits displayed in Figure 1 highlight the fluctuations in forestry revenues across the Military Services and across FYs, with increased revenue generally corresponding to increased timber harvest. Factors such as storm events, pre-harvest care (e.g., reforestation, forest access road repair), and mission activities (e.g., expanding training areas) can impact timber harvest. Additionally, the market for timber, lumber, paper, and pulp fluctuates. For example, strong tornadoes and hurricanes in FY12 (e.g., Isaac, Sandy) knocked down acres of forest and thus increased harvests and revenues at Fort Benning, Fort Stewart, and Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune.

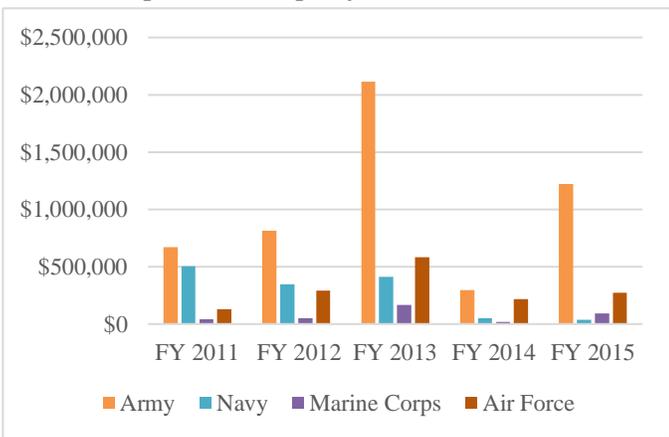


Figure 1: Military Service FRA Deposits from FY11 to FY15

Overall deposits dropped to \$582K in FY14 because less timber was available to harvest during the year following the storm. In FY15, landscapes began to recover and deposits returned to pre-storm levels at \$1.6M.

FRA Withdrawals

Each FY, the Military Services can submit a “withdrawal request” to OSD for FRA funds. Figure 2 displays withdrawals by Military Service for FY11 through FY15. Because there was more money available in FY13 and FY15, the Military Services submitted significantly more proposals

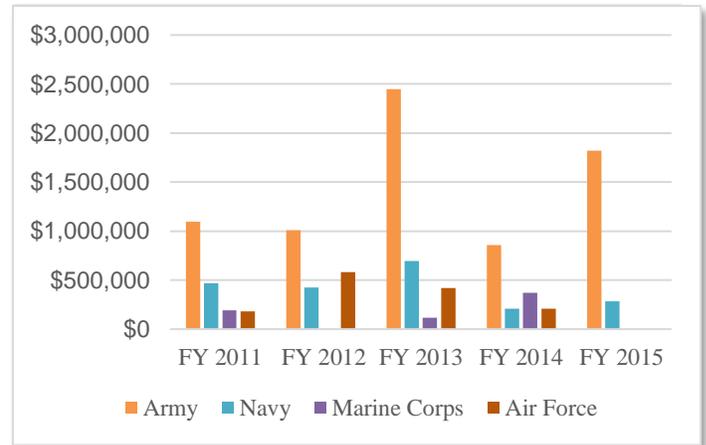


Figure 2: Military Service FRA Withdrawals from FY11 to FY15 during those years. The increase in Army withdrawals in FY15 is due to Fort Gordon, Fort Polk, and Fort Stewart purchasing new bulldozers for wildland fire management, help conducting prescribed burns, and conducting clearing operations. The Army manages nearly half of DoD’s 25 million acres, so it typically generates most of the timber harvest revenue, and requests and receives the most funding. On average, the Army received approximately 62% of the total FRA funding between FY11 and FY15. The average funding allocations for the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps during this same period were 18%, 13%, and 7%, respectively.



Prescribed burning at Fort Polk (Photo from Fort Polk website)



Enabling the Mission, Defending the Resources
Department of Defense Natural Resources Program

FRA Funding Trends and Patterns

Project Types

FRA funds benefit a wide range of forest projects that vary greatly in size, scope, and category. Figure 3 displays FRA project types from FY12 to FY15.

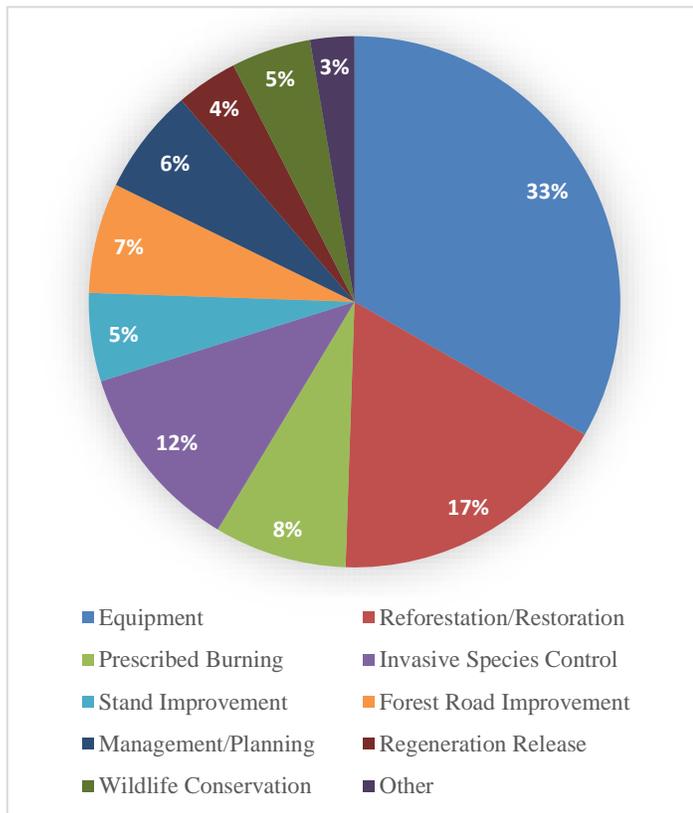


Figure 3: FRA Project Categories from FY12 to FY15

The greatest FRA funding need in the last few years has been purchasing and maintaining equipment (e.g., heavy duty pickup trucks, forestry bulldozers, harvesting and prescribed burning equipment). Of the 186 projects from FY12 to FY15, 62 were for equipment expenses. Equipment expenses have increased every year since FY12, reaching \$1.8M in FY15.

The second greatest need was restocking and restoring depleted forests and woodlands by planting trees and removing undergrowth. There were 32 reforestation and restoration projects from FY12 to FY15. Demand for these projects has decreased over the past several years as other needs (e.g., equipment and prescribed burning) have increased. Reforestation and restoration project expenses decreased from \$591K in FY12 to \$159K in FY15.

The third greatest funding need was invasive species control. There were 22 projects from FY12 to FY15 that managed invasive species on forest lands. The demand for invasive species management peaked at 10 projects worth \$507K in FY13 due to strong tornadoes and hurricanes the previous year that knocked down trees and other native species, creating an opportunity for invasives to flourish. The demand for invasive species efforts decreased to two projects in FY14 and increased to six projects in FY15.

FRA funding allows the Military Services to conduct a wide range of projects on forest lands. Proactive forest management at the U.S. Air Force Academy in FY14 (e.g., removing invasive plants to help prevent stress on trees) helped fend off a potentially devastating mountain pine beetle epidemic, which ravaged nearly four million acres across Colorado. This project is just one example of how implementing FRA projects, in combination with other INRMP efforts, helps sustain and enhance DoD lands so they are available for training and operational activities.



Longleaf pine trees in Florida
(Photo from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

Contact Information:

Ryan Orndorff
Program Director
DoD Natural Resources
ryan.b.orndorff.civ@mail.mil
<https://www.denix.osd.mil/nr>
<https://twitter.com/dodnatres>

February 2021

